

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

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R 171000Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY BANGUI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7383

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

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PASS ALSO TOPEC FOR CDO/CAR

E.O. 11652: N/A

SUBJECT: GOCAR COMMENTS ON OUHAM RURAL HEALTH PROJECT

1. GOCAR MINISTR OF HEALTH HAS TRANSMITTED TO THE EMBASSY THREE PART COMMENTARY ON OUHAM RURAL HEALTH PROJECT. (DOCUMENT BEING POUCHED). PART I SETS OUT GOCAR'S OWN HEALTH PRIORITIES UNDER NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 1976-1980, NOTING THAT OUHAM PREFECTURE HAD THIRD PRIORITY AFTER OMBELLA-M'POKO (BANGUI) AND BOSSE KOTTO. PART II PROVIDES DETAILED LINE BY LINE AND PAGE BY PAGE COMMENTARY ON USAID PROJECT DOCUEMTN. PART III IS GOCAR'S JUSTIFICATION FOR MODIFICATIONS PROPOSDD.

2. PRINCIPAL CRITICISM OF PROJECT REMAIN ESSENTIALLY UNCHANGED FROM ORIGINAL COMMENTS MADE TO PROJECT DESIGN TEAM. PROJECT A) IGNORESNGOJAR'S PRIORITY FOR BASSE KOTTO; B) IS TOP HEAVY IN EXPENSIVE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE; AND C) PROVIDES INSUFFICIENT MATERIAL SUPPORT FOR GOCAR'S HEALTH PRIORITIES. REPORT ALSO STATES THAT PROPOSED CHANGES FOR MEDICINES ARE CONTRARY TO GOCAR POLICY AND CANNOT BE ACCEPTED. REPORT IS PARTICULARLY CRITIIL OF USG FOR HAVING PRESENTED GOCAR WITH FAIT ACCOMPLI IN ITS CHOICE OF OUHAM. REPORT CHARACTERIZES

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THIS ALLEGED ACTION IN FORCING GOCAR'S HAND AS "NOT ACCEPTABLE".

HOWEVER, REPORT RECOGNIZES THAT VALUABLE TIME WOULD BE LOST IF PROJECT WERE TO BE SHIFTED TO BASSE KOTTO AND IN EFFECT ACCEPTS BASIC PROJECT DESIGN WITH CONDITION THAT A PART OF PROJECT RESOURCES (A QUARTER IS SUGGESTED) BE DEVOTED TO BASSE KOTTO.

3. IN ORDER TO MEET DESIRES FOR GREATER MATERIAL INPUTS GOCAR PROPOSES DELETION OF PUBLIC HEALTH DOCTOR FROM PROJECT AND ASSIGNMENT OF BANGUI BASED MPH IN BOSSANGO, THEREBY FREEING DOLS 252,000 FOR OTHER PURPOSES. TWELVE MAN MONTHS OF CONSULTATION ARE REDUCED TO SIX FOR FURTHER SAVING OF DOLS 42,000. PEACE CORPS CONTRIBUTION SIMILARLY REDUCED FROM TEN TO SIX VOLUNTEERS.

4. REPORT PROPOSES THAT CONSTRUCTION OF PREMISES (HEALTH CENTERS AND HEALTH POSTS) BE INCREASED FROM DOLS 105,000 TO DOLS 315,000 AND ALLOCATION FOR VEHICLE MAINTENANCE FROM DOLS 25,000 TO DOLS 79,000 OR DOLS 100,000.

WTM COMMENT: THESE CRITICISMS AND SUGGESTED MODIFICATIONS DO NOT COME AS GREAT SURPRISES. ESSENTIAL QUESTION WHICH IS POSED IS DEGREE TO WHICH WE SHOULD AGREE TO REDUCE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND INSTEAD UTILIZE FUNDS FOR HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE. BASSE KOTTO PROBLEM IS LESS ACUTE IF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE IS REDUCED SINCE FUNDS COULD THEN BE APPLIED TO POSSIBLE CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES IN BASSE KOTTO, WHERE HEALTH CENTERS AND POSTS ALSO PLANNED. INNOVATIVE OUTREACH AND VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT ASPECTS OF THE PROJECT WOULD CONTINUE TO BE FOCUSED IN OUHAM. EMBASSY HOPES SOME SUCH ARRANGEMENT CAN BE WORKED OUT TO ENABLE PROJECT TO GO FORWARD ON SCHEDULE. WOULD APPRECIATE PROMPT REVIEW OF LOCAR'S COMMENTS AND REACTION OF ADDRESSEES. QUAINTON

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